ROTHBURY

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER

FOR THE YEAR ENDING

DECEMBER 31st, 1898.

ALNWICK:

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ROTHBURY, JANUARY 21ST, 1899.

TO THE ROTHBURY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

Allow me to present to you this, my Third Annual Report. During the year 1898, there were registered 33 births, of which 12 were males, and 21 females. Estimating the population at 1,200, this is equal to a rate of 27·5 as against that of 30·0 for England and Wales. They were registered as follows, during the first quarter, 5; the second, 11; the third, 9; and last 8.

The deaths, I regret to say, are again heavy, being 26 in number, but one being a stranger that died in the Workhouse, leaves 25, which is at a rate of 20·83; making the average for 10 years, 18·6, a little above 17·0, the average of country towns, while that for England and Wales is 19·0. There were 13 males, and 12 females; and they occurred as follows: From December of last year, 1; during January, 1; February, 3; March, 0; April, 4; May, 1; June, 4; July, 2; August, 2; September, 1; October, 3; November, 2; December, 1.

As there were 33 births, and 25 deaths, the difference of 8, represents the natural increase to the population, and this is at a rate of 6·6, that for England and Wales being 12·0.

Of the 33 births, it appears that 2 died whilst under 1 year of age, hence in infancy, which gives a very low and satisfactory rate of only 60·5 per 1,000, as against that of 120·0 for England and Wales.

There were no deaths due to the zymotic class of diseases, which is very satisfactory. The chief causes of death were, phthisis (consumption), 3, one of which followed a severe attack of influenza; bronchitis and pneumonia, 3; while from heart disease, there were absolutely 8 deaths, nearly one-third of the whole; a large number of them, I believe were due to the influenza and its sequelœ. Injuries caused 1 death, which was the male who cut his throat at Addyheugh Cottage, whilst temporary insane. Of the other causes 4 were due to senile decay; 1 to apoplexy, and one to debility.

The periods of life at which these occurred, were as follows, under one year of age, 2; fifteen and under twenty-five, 1; twenty-five and under sixty-five, 10; whilst thirteen or one half were over that age. Of these latter, one was 101 years of age, five others were over 80 years of age, and three others over 70.

The stranger was a male who died in the Workhouse of Bright's disease. The Coroner held an inquest upon the man at Addyheugh Villa.

There were no cases of overcrowding, and no proceedings before the magistrates.

There were no cases of scarlet or typhoid fever.

Measles broke out in Addycomb Cottages (Smails), in February, there were two in all affected. They were kept from school, and isolated as far as possible, with disinfectants, and it did not spread.

It again broke out at the same place, on November 2nd, when two were affected (Wilson). The family had been away at Blyth, fourteen days before, where it existed. The same steps were taken and it did not spread.

Diarrhœa was a little prevalent in September.

Influenza occurred all through the year, a good deal in March. It was not often severe, during the illness, but in its after effects, I fear, has been very disastrous. Doubtless, a large part of the eight deaths due to heart disease, resulted from this affection. Bronchitis, &c., was also above the average, and these are usual complications of the disease. As it is decidedly infectious, people cannot be too careful in keeping away from it.

Chicken pox affected the four children in the Workhouse, in December. They were kept from school, and it did not spread.

I inspected the slaughter houses, &c., several times during the year, and thanks to the attention of your inspector, found a decided change for the better in them all. The lodging house was also tidy and clean.

A nuisance caused by keeping pigs too close to Mr Clark's house, and others, was abated. An ash-midden, at the head of the village, serving for too many tenants, was overflowing, and emptied after a caution.

Mr Green's house at the Gate, has been improved, but it is far from right. At your request I examined into the sanitary arrangements at the Railway Station. These were defective and antiquated, being somewhat improved.

A Committee from your Council has met one from the Rural, and a useful Hospital for infectious diseases is being erected near Whitton Burn, to accommodate four patients and a nurse, when complete. This is a great want supplied. The Notification Act is now definitely in operation.

Mr Bertram of Cragside, with his usual courtesy, has again furnished me with the returns of rain and sunshine, that for 1898 being as follows:—

Month.	Inches.
January	0·79
February	1·00
March	2·43
April	3·74
May	1·50
June	2·00
July	0·87
August	2 12
September	1·49
October	7·67
November	4·85
December	2·49
Total ...	30·95

Our average is 34 inches. Nearly twice the amount fell in October that fell any month. There were 148 wet days during the year, and the hours of sunshine were 1,402.

Your obedient servant,

F. BARROW,

Medical Officer of Health.